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REMARKS

I. Introduction

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 30, 31, 34, 61-65, 67 and 69-80 will be pending in this application. Claim 30 has been amended to clarify the features of the invention. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at page 17, paragraph [0097], page 18, paragraph [0098] and Figs. 2, 3 and 5. Claims 2, 4, 6-11, 17, 21, 24-26, 48 and 50-60 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 69-80 have been added. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at page 12, paragraph [0077] through page 13, paragraph [0078]. No new matter has been added.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

II. Rejections based on 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 2, 4, 6-11, 17, 21, 24-26, 33 34, 48, 51-60, 61-68 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,196,221 to Dew in view of the following: U.S. Patent No. 6,309,681 to Prasad et al., U.S. Patent No. 1,402,204 to Alsop, EP 0 462 444 to Simonsen, U.S. Patent No. 4,627,007 to Muschany, U.S. Patent No. 6,010,726 to Evans et al., EP 879,561 to Tanaka, WO 93/13671 to Janssen et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,971,088 to Osiadacz and GB 2177585 to Vincent et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the claims overcome these rejections and request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof. Applicants have canceled the claims relating the method of marinating meat products. The remaining claims relate to a device for marinating meat products. The claims, as amended, clarify that the marinade application stations are positioned so that the meat products sequentially pass along the marinade

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applications and that each of the marinade application stations are associated with a different marinade.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Dew* fails to teach that its sprays 3 are positioned so that poultry 6 sequentially passes along the sprays 3. The single figure shows a cross-section perpendicular to the direction of the tunnel where scalding and chilling of poultry can be carried out. The figure shows the sprays 3 in the same plane and thus, they appear to have a vertical configuration. *Dew* does not teach that the sprays 3 may be in different vertical planes such that poultry 6 would pass sequentially along the sprays 3.

Applicants also respectfully submit that *Dew* fails to teach that each of the sprays 3 is associated with a different marinade. Even if including additives in the water is equivalent to a marinade, as suggested by the Examiner, *Dew* does not teach that each of the sprays may include different additives.

Even if *Dew* were combined with one of the references suggested by the Examiner, the combinations fail to teach the amended claims. Both *Prased et al.* and *Evans et al.* disclose spraying a marinade onto meat products, but the marinades used in *Prased et al.* and *Evans et al.* are complex marinades, which are pre-mixed and then sprayed onto the meat product in one step. As explained in Applicants' specification at page 3, paragraph [0015], complex marinades are expensive and may be difficult to mix. Applicants' invention includes a device in which at least one of the marinade application stations is associated with a different marinade as a way to overcome the problems with complex marinades.

None of the remaining references teach the application of multiple marinades. Thus, none of the references teaches applying different marinades onto a meat product either successively or simultaneously.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the amendments and the above remarks, Applicants are of the opinion that the Office Action has been completely responded to and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes any informalities remain in the application that may be corrected by Examiner's Amendment, or there are any other issues that can be resolved by telephone interview, a telephone call to the undersigned attorney at (404) 815-6409 is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Aleta A. Mills
Reg. No. 47,794

KILPATRICK STOCKTON LLP
1100 Peachtree Street
Suite 2800
Atlanta, Georgia 30309-4530
General Phone: (404) 815-6500
Docket: V0028/258606